

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Robert Doucet, I am a Detective with the Rolling Meadows Police Department in Cook County, Illinois. The last two years I have been assigned to work as the primary Detective in Identity Theft cases. When our department first addressed the issue of Identity Theft, we had no procedures or general orders on how to handle Identity Theft. I sent out a questionnaire to 30 local agencies in the Chicago land area regarding their procedures and investigative procedures regarding this fast rising crime. Out of the 30 that were asked to respond, 1 agency had a general order or a plan to combat ID Theft and this general order was four lines. Since then we have created and "Identity Theft Crime Victim Assistance Kit" from the help of other local agencies. We have completed a comprehensive general order which puts us in compliance with Illinois law that states that all agencies will take ID Theft reports from their citizens even though the crime occurred else where. Many agencies I have spoke to do not even know this law exists.

Since our interest in ID Theft two years ago, I have given several presentations to our local community including our local government regarding ID Theft and what they should be doing to help protect themselves. I also point out the fact that law enforcement is almost helpless with these heinous crimes. A good percentage of these crimes occur across state lines and even across jurisdictions. This is where the local investigation ends. The jurisdiction where the incident occurred is often busy with their own important cases. Even when an arrest is made, local States Attorney's Offices are often inexperienced or unwilling to prove the case. I have recently been apart of the first Identity Theft trial in Cook County Illinois. Before the trial, our States Attorney's were contacting every States Attorney they knew regarding an ID Theft trial. No one had attempted one. Even when the jury was given instructions by the judge on what the state needed to prove, he unknowingly miss interpreted the state statute. But we ultimately won the case. I have taken great interest in ID Theft and consider it a crime in which is being put aside for other "headlining" crimes. The victims are losing more than just time while fixing their good name. They are losing dreams that they have worked their whole life to obtain.

I understand the proposal to have the offenders not only provide the victims with restitution but also provide them with restitution with their lost time fixing their good name. But when I look at actually how many Identity Thieves see a court room (1 in 700 get convicted), I think we need more remedies for law enforcement to combat, deter, investigate, and prosecute these offenders.

What I will list below is a few obstacles I have encountered and some few suggestions I would like to see implemented. I am willing to work on these issues with your organization if you need local law enforcement prospective. This has become a great interest of mine and I would like to see law enforcement come up with better remedies to deter these life ruining acts.

### **Recommendations from case experience**

1. In cases where I have seen several victims from not only my jurisdiction but other jurisdictions file reports that can be traced back to one offender or several offenders, we often seek Federal assistance. We seek Federal assistance for the resources they have across the country. I have in the past identified the source of the offender and I have contacted that jurisdiction. Too many times that jurisdiction will not investigate based on their manpower or their capabilities, which is understandable. When a federal agency is contacted, I am asked the same question, "What is the total dollar amount that is lost?" I am told time and time again that Federal Investigators will not even open a case if the loss is under \$100,000. Sometimes I think the bad guys are figuring this out. We are then forced to rely on local law enforcement to open the case which involves several jurisdictions and several agencies. In the real world this doesn't happen. The case is then put aside. So I am recommending that the threshold for Federal Investigators be lowered to allow them to open an investigation.
2. I have also run into the problem of getting my victim from out of state into my local court room. This just does not happen. Most of my investigations take me across state lines and across jurisdictions. I propose that the Identity Theft Statute allows for the victim not to be present during the court proceedings. This is based on the fact that the victim rarely witnesses the incident. These are all computer or paper based crimes. I believe the thieves know this and the chances of someone traveling to testify against them are zero.
3. This next recommendation is a tangent off of your National Task Force idea, I just expanded a bit. I feel a National ID Task Force should be created of federally trained local law enforcement investigators. These investigators would consist of 1 or 2 investigators from each town, county, or state. These investigators would be detached from their agency and work primarily on ID theft cases. The investigators would be funded by their own agency (regular salary). I see this being done with drug, gang, and homicide units. The investigators would be able to obtain information (cases) from a universal record keeping system that come in from all over the country and the thieves operate from their respective territory. I would also recommend that specialized prosecuting attorneys work side by side with the investigators in their territory. This would give them immediate access to search warrants, subpoena's, or any other court needed documents. This would reduce in the time spent tracking down less qualified state attorneys.

These are just a few ideas that I have thought about when I am investigating ID Theft. I would be willing to expand on these ideas if the opportunity is given to me. I feel that I represent the local law enforcement community who see the victims pouring into our Police Departments. I see new types of ID theft crimes daily and its time that law enforcement catch up with the criminals and start working together. I feel communication between law enforcement agencies is essential. I also feel we

have the tools to combat this we just need to organize them. Please feel free to contact me if you feel I could help with this in any way. Thank you.

Sincerely,

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